

Office of National Drug Control Policy

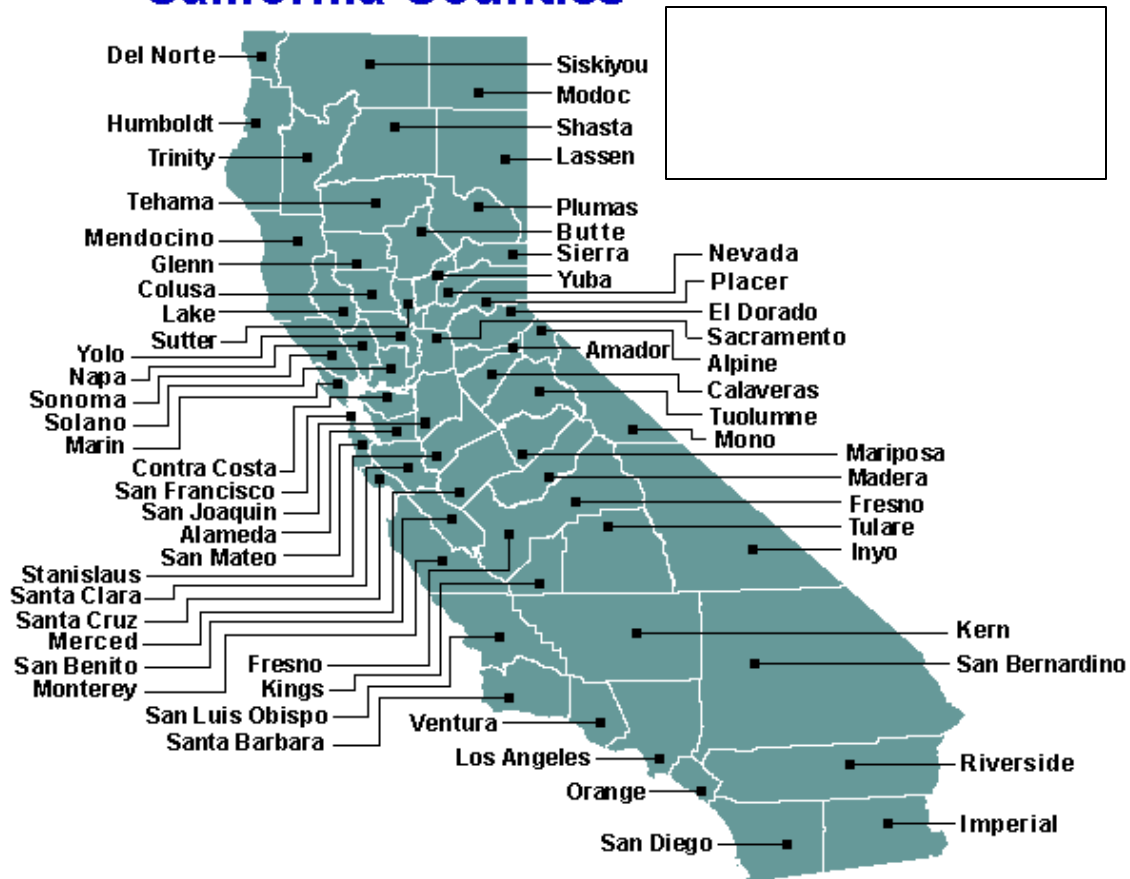
Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

State of California

Profile of Drug Indicators

July 2000

California Counties



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

California

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 29,786,000 (1990 census); 33,145,000 (1999 estimate)
- Gender Breakdown: 50.06% Male, 49.94% Female
- Age Breakdown: 27.3% under 18 years old, 11.1% 65 years and older
- Racial/ethnic distribution: 68.9% White; 7.4% Black; .8% American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut; 9.6% Asian or Pacific Islander; 25.8% Hispanic Origin
- Percent of population below poverty level: 15.4%

Politics²

- Senate Members: Dianne Feinstein (D), Barbara Boxer (D).
- House Members: Mike Thompson (D), Wally Herger (R), Doug Ose (R), John Doolittle (R), Robert Matsui (D), Lynn Woolsey (D), George Miller (D), Nancy Pelosi (D), Barbara Lee (D), Ellen Tauscher (D), Richard Pombo (R), Tom Lantos (D), Fortney Stark (D), Anna Eshoo (D), Tom Campbell (R), Zoe Lofgren (D), Sam Farr (D), Gary Condit (D), George Radanovich (R), Calvin Dooley (D), William Thomas (R), Lois Capps (D), Elton Gallegly (R), Brad Sherman (D), Howard McKeon (R), Howard Berman (D), James Rogan (R), David Dreier (R), Henry Waxman (D), Xavier Becerra (D), Mathew Martinez (D), Julian Dixon (D), Lucille Roybal-Allard (D), Grace Napolitano (R), Maxine Waters (D), Steven Kuykendall (R), Juanita Millender-McDonald (D), Steve Horn (R), Edward Royce (R), Jerry Lewis (R), Gary Miller (R), Joe Baca (D), Ken Calvert (R), Mary Bono (R), Dana Rohrabacher (R), Loretta Sanchez (D), Christopher Cox (R), Ron Packard (R), Brian Bilbray (R), Bob Filner (D), Randy Cunningham (R), Duncan Hunter (R)
- Governor of California: Gray Davis
- Governor's Office of Criminal Justice Planning, Executive Director: David R. Shaw
- Attorney General: Bill Lockyer
- Northern California HIDTA Director: Steven Wood
- Central Valley HIDTA: William Ruzzamenti
- Los Angeles HIDTA Director: Roger Bass
- Southwest Border HIDTA California Partnership: Richard Gorman

Programs and Initiatives

- In FY 1999 ONDCP in conjunction with the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention awarded grants to 13 community coalitions throughout California under the Drug Free Communities Support Program.
- Designated in 1990, as the western part of the Southwest Border HIDTA, the California Border Alliance Group is a geographically and culturally diverse region with 149 miles of international border. This most populous region of the Southwest Border includes San Diego and other cities. The Alliance is organized to deter, disrupt, and destroy the most significant drug trafficking organizations, reducing the

supply of cocaine, marijuana, heroin and methamphetamine in the United States. The HIDTA program also addresses drug transportation, money laundering, gangs and specific local problems.

- The Los Angeles HIDTA, designated in 1990, is located in a four-county region of California where distributing illicit drugs is lucrative, where pursuing drug traffickers is increasingly complex, and where 90 percent of drug traffickers in certain districts are illegal aliens. The 32,341 square-mile area has highly developed air, sea, and land transportation routes in close proximity to the U.S. border with Mexico which have made it a significant distribution and storage center for illicit drugs destined for major metropolitan areas of the United States. The HIDTA operates five major drug task forces, three intelligence projects, and six critical support initiatives comprised of collocated federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.
- The Northern California HIDTA was designated in 1997. The HIDTA includes ten northern California counties that are situated on the San Francisco Bay, which is a central point for the movement of illegal drugs and precursor chemicals for the manufacture of dangerous drugs. The region is simultaneously both a major production site and a nationwide distribution center. The Bay area's location facilitates water, air, and ground routes for illegal drugs such as heroin, and the production of methamphetamine. The ports of Oakland and San Francisco are used to smuggle illegal drugs through containerized shipments. Commercial vehicles have become an increasingly popular method of smuggling with the use of many highway corridors. Northern California has become increasingly the target of Mexican polydrug organizations. The Bay Area HIDTA is composed of individual law enforcement agencies united in the common goal of reducing drug-related crime, violence, and abuse in our community.
- The Central Valley HIDTA was designated in 1999 and includes the counties of Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Tulare, Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus. The nine counties of the Central Valley, California HIDTA area comprise a major agricultural center for the nation. The region is populated by approximately four million residents although the population swells seasonally as the need for agricultural migrant labor fluctuates. The area is serviced by two international airports and hundreds of private airstrips. The Central Valley also contains several major interstate highways including Interstate 5 and Highway 99 which are the traffickers' favored routes of transportation for moving drugs from Mexico and the Central Valley to Northern California and the Pacific Northwest.

The Central Valley continues to be a primary manufacturing, transshipment, distribution, and consumption area for illegal narcotics, and for methamphetamine in particular. Within the last several years the area has experienced a dramatic increase in the number and scale of clandestine methamphetamine manufacturing labs operating within the region.

The Central Valley HIDTA Executive Committee is comprised of 14 local, state, and Federal law enforcement leaders in the California Central Valley HIDTA areas of responsibility. A unified approach between law enforcement and prosecution agencies facilitates efforts to reduce the impact of methamphetamine production, trafficking, and distribution in the Central Valley.

- California's first drug court began in Alameda County, in 1991. By 1994, there were 8 drug courts in California. In 1995, California's first juvenile offender drug court began in Tulare County and the original 8 had grown to 24 drug courts. As of June 1999, the Administrative Office of the Court has recorded 98 drug courts (77 operational drug courts in California and an additional 21 drug courts are in the planning stages) in 44 counties of the State, including juvenile drug courts for drug offenders.
- The purpose of the Drug-Endangered Children Program is to intervene on behalf of children who have been exposed to methamphetamine or its precursors as a result of residing in a home-based clandestine drug laboratory. The exposure to this environment, and highly toxic chemicals, can cause a number of dangerous side effects which may include:
 - the risk of severe damage to the kidney, spleen, or liver;
 - emotional and behavioral problems which may affect not only school performance, but cause violent or paranoia behavior;
 - a lack of proper nutrition or adequate health-care maintenance; and
 - the possibility of fire or explosions due to the flammable materials carelessly left in the home-based laboratory.

The Drug-Endangered Children Program is divided into two separate programs, the Response Training Center Component and the Response Team Development Component, which compliment each other but are distinct in their approach to drug-endangered children.

The Response Team Development Component provides funds for local law enforcement agencies to develop a comprehensive multiagency response to drug endangered children. Law enforcement, prosecution, social services, and medical providers are the primary components of this multiagency approach to children exposed to toxic chemicals. Each of these service providers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities which result in the identification and intervention of the at-risk children.³

- Grant recipients in each of California's 58 counties are provided funding to focus efforts on one or more primary offender targets: major upper level drug offenders; mid-level drug offenders; street-level offenders; and/or gang-related drug offenders. An essential mandatory requirement of the program is for every county to develop a comprehensive, multi-component enforcement plan detailing the address of its drug problems. Funding is available for law enforcement agencies, prosecution offices, and probation departments to implement coordinated program strategies which impact selected target groups. Additionally, counties are strongly encouraged to involve their courts and the County Drug Administrator in the development of the countywide anti-drug abuse plan.

Counties choose from an array of program strategies developed by local steering committees representative of law enforcement, prosecution, and probation. These strategies include:

- special enforcement operations which may involve narcotic details, task forces, street sweeps, buy/busts, etc.; property crime stings;
- criminal justice information systems; reverse stings; custodial drug treatment;
- pretrial/pre-adjudication intensive supervised release; home detention program;

- civil abatement;
- asset forfeiture investigations/prosecutions;
- special assignments for prosecution, which involve task force participation, vertical prosecution, cross-designated prosecutions, etc.;
- early disposition teams;
- crime laboratory analyses;
- narcotics task forces;
- intensive supervision;
- probation drug specialists;
- court delay reduction; and
- special drug courts.

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- The Crime Index total for California dropped 9.6% from 1,569,949 in 1997 to 1,418,674 in 1998. Between 1997 and 1998 the Violent Crime Index total was down 10.8% and the Property Crime Index total was down 11.9%.
- Of the 263,724 arrests in 1998 for drug abuse violations 24,715 involved people under the age of 18.

Arrests in the State of California 1998⁴

Offense	Juvenile	Total All Ages
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	310	2,114
Forcible rape	412	3,024
Robbery	6,816	21,493
Aggravated assault	11,715	114,579
Burglary	19,823	55,437
Larceny-theft	40,244	117,698
Motor vehicle theft	8,211	24,498
Arson	1,029	1,760
Drug abuse violations	24,715	263,724
Driving under the influence	1,770	188,867
Liquor laws	6,556	32,352
Drunkenness	5,494	116,921

- Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Jose had between 48.2% and 68.6% of their male arrestees testing positive for drugs. Test results for female arrestees ranged between 41.5% and 71.0% for the three California cities.

Percent of Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, 1998⁵

	Sex	Los Angeles	San Diego	San Jose
Any Drug	Males	64.4%	68.6%	48.2%
	Females	71.0	63.9	41.5
Cocaine	Males	42.7	19.1	8.0
	Females	44.7	20.4	9.5
Marijuana	Males	27.3	36.4	24.8
	Females	21.8	26.7	13.6
Opiates	Males	5.6	9.3	4.4
	Females	8.8	6.7	4.8
Methamphetamine	Males	8.0	33.4	19.7
	Females	11.8	33.3	21.1
PCP	Males	2.3	0.9	2.1
	Females	1.3	0.8	2.7
Multiple Drugs	Males	21.4	27.8	11.9
	Females	22.9	26.3	12.2

Drugs

➤ Heroin

Reports from San Francisco, San Diego, and Los Angeles areas show heroin use as stable or up. Users are mostly male; between the ages of 20 and 50, and the majority are either white or Latino. San Francisco also reports an increase in younger college age users smoking and snorting heroin. The primary method of use is injection but other methods such as snorting and smoking are on the rise. Cocaine and amphetamines are the primary drugs used in combination with heroin.⁶

Treatment admissions for heroin in Los Angeles made up 51% of all admissions in 1997. Those admitted were mostly male (71%), and age 35-44 (43%). Hispanics accounted for 41% of the admissions, whites (38%), and African Americans (13%). Treatment admissions for heroin in San Diego were less than Los Angeles but the demographics of those admitted were similar. Of the 1,334 admissions in San Diego during 1997 63% were males, 54% were 35 and older, 57% white, 7% African American, and 32% Hispanic. In San Francisco there were a total of 3,985 heroin admissions in FY 1997. Those admitted for heroin treatment in San Francisco were again mostly male (66%), white (62%), and older than 35 (67%). In all three cities injection was the primary method of use.⁷

The price for a gram of heroin in California runs from \$20 to \$25 for 1/4 gram. Los Angeles reports purity ranging between 40 to 60 percent and a price of \$18,000 per kilogram. San Diego reports \$10-\$20 for .2-.5 grams, \$110 for a gram, and a purity ranging from 40%-60%⁸

➤ Cocaine

Los Angeles, San Diego, and San Francisco report cocaine use as stable or up. Cocaine users are mostly male and those that use powder cocaine are predominately middle or upper class. Powder cocaine use among younger adults (18-25) has increased in the San Francisco area. Crack cocaine users are mostly older African American males. The methods of use continue to be snorting and smoking, and cocaine is being used in combination with heroin and marijuana.⁹

In Los Angeles the 1,526 treatment admissions in the fourth quarter of 1997 were mostly male (54%) and 61% were African American. In San Diego there were 1,267 cocaine-related treatment admissions in 1997. A majority of these admissions were male (54%), 35 and older (52%), and African American (62%). In San Francisco during 1997 there were 2,851 cocaine-related treatment admissions. They were mostly male (61%), African American (74%), 35 and older (49%), and smoking (91%) was the preferred method of use.¹⁰

The price of cocaine in Los Angeles is \$80 per gram and \$600-\$700 per ounce. San Francisco prices have decreased and cocaine is selling for \$50 per gram. Cocaine in San Diego goes for \$10 per crack rock, \$60-\$100 per gram, and \$600-\$700 per ounce with a purity between 20% to 40%.¹¹

➤ Marijuana

Areas within California report marijuana use as stable or rising, and increases specifically with younger users. There are a wide range of marijuana users, including both male and female, and ages from 16-35. Alcohol is the most common drug used in combination with marijuana.¹²

Marijuana treatment admissions in Los Angeles totaled 511 in during the fourth quarter of 1997. Of those admitted 66% were male, 30% white, 30% African American, 34% were Hispanic, and 41% were under the age of 18. In San Diego there were 821 marijuana treatment admissions that accounted for 7% of all admissions in 1997. The majority of the admissions were male (70%) and young (32% under 18). The racial breakdown of admissions were 48% white, 19% African American, 24% Hispanic, and 9% Asian.¹³

Overall marijuana prices are lower in the southern section of the State, primarily due to its proximity to the border, and glut of low-grade, commercial Mexican marijuana. Local and State authorities report that California-grown "sinsemilla" marijuana is significantly higher in potency than some of the other types in the US. Some estimates place the value of a mature plant grown in California at around \$5,000. Prices for high-grade marijuana in California ranges from \$400-500 per gram or \$50 to \$60 for a 1/8 of an ounce. Los Angeles reports prices as low as \$5 for a small bag of good purity marijuana.¹⁴

➤ Methamphetamine

Sources indicate methamphetamine rivals cocaine as the drug of choice in California. In San Diego methamphetamine use has doubled, and other areas also report a rise in use.¹⁵

Methamphetamine treatment admissions increased in Los Angeles to account for 8% of all admissions in the fourth quarter of 1997. Those admitted were mostly male

(55%), white (67%) or Hispanic (21%), and most were age 25-34 (47%). The method of use for those admitted in Los Angeles were inhalers (42%), smokers (37%), and injectors (15%). In San Diego methamphetamine-related treatment admissions accounted for 37% of all treatment admissions during 1997. The majority of those admitted were female (52%) and 27% were 25 or younger. The most common secondary drug reported for those admitted in San Diego was marijuana. San Francisco saw an increase in methamphetamine use among young white males, including blue collar workers, young professionals, and college students. Treatment admissions for methamphetamine rose from 4.1% of all admissions in 1991 to 11.7% in 1997. The majority of those admitted were white (71%), male (76%), and 20% were under 25 while 34% were 35 or older. The primary method of use for San Francisco was injection, which accounted for 57% of treatment admissions.¹⁶ Sources in San Diego report that methamphetamine is being sold for \$50-\$80 per gram, \$450-\$900 per ounce, and \$5,000-\$10,000 per pound. The purity of methamphetamine in San Diego ranged from 20% to 40%.¹⁷

- A 1997 survey of adults in California revealed that 45.5% of those surveyed had used an illicit drug at least once in their lifetime.¹⁸

Drug	Past 30 Days	Past Year	Lifetime
Marijuana	5.5%	11.1%	44.8%
Cocaine	0.8%	1.9%	17.2%
Hallucinogen	0.2%	1.4%	13.2%
Amphetamines	0.4%	1.6%	12.1%
Opiates	0.1%	0.3%	3.9%
Any Illicit Drugs	5.9%	11.9%	45.5%

Juveniles

- During 1998 in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose between 41.7% and 60.7% of male juvenile arrestees tested positive for drugs. The most common drug that arrestees tested positive for in all three cities was marijuana.

Percent of Juvenile Male Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs, 1998¹⁹

	Los Angeles	San Diego	San Jose
Any Drug	60.7%	56.1%	41.7
Cocaine	14.6	4.4	5.8
Marijuana	56.0	48.9	35.3
Opiates	0.9	1.1	1.9
Methamphetamine	3.6	12.2	9.0
PCP	1.7	0.6	1.3
Multiple Drugs	15.2	10.8	10.3

- During 1997 46.6% of California high school students had tried marijuana at least once in their lifetime.

Percent of California* High School Students Using Selected Drugs, 1997

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime Marijuana Use (1)	43.1%	51.0%	46.6%
Current Marijuana Use (2)	22.7	30.2	26.1
Lifetime Cocaine Use	10.3	10.9	10.6
Current Cocaine Use	3.4	4.7	4.0
Lifetime "Crack" or "Freebase" Use	6.4	7.8	7.1
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	2.4	3.8	3.0
Lifetime Injected Illegal Drug Use (3)	1.4	2.1	1.7
Lifetime Use of Other Illegal Drugs (4)	15.2	19.3	17.1
Lifetime Use of Inhalants	14.3	16.8	15.4

1. Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life

2. Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey

3. Used a needle to inject drugs

4. Other Drugs Include = LSD, PCP, MDMA, Heroin, Methamphetamine, and Mushrooms

* Does not include Los Angeles Unified School District, 1999 YRBSS data available but not for the whole State of California.

Trafficking and Seizures

- California is a transshipment point of heroin; final destinations include New York and New Jersey. Distribution networks similar to those used for cocaine are used for heroin. Colombian and Mexican organizations are currently increasing their role in the trafficking, primarily because of the recent increase in Colombian heroin in the market.²⁰
- DEA and the California Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement report that the majority of cocaine entering California comes from the northern States in Mexico. DEA reports that Los Angeles is the primary distribution point of cocaine for California and the Northwest US. To escape detection by enforcement agencies, cocaine is being smuggled in smaller quantities by truckers, illegal aliens, and frequent travelers crossing the border on legitimate business. While the overall processing and shipment of cocaine is supervised by Mexican and Colombian organizations, individual family cells provide the actual manpower needed to transport the shipments.²¹
- Mexican marijuana is primary smuggled into California through the southwest border using commercial conveyances and other land vehicles. Local law enforcement report that northern California is the major cultivation site for marijuana in the State. Indoor marijuana cultivation is increasing in the State and law enforcement sources attribute this shift in cultivation due to enhanced eradication efforts.²²
DEA reports that California is one of the top six indoor growing States. Marijuana is routinely bartered for cocaine, crack, and methamphetamine between street and mid-level drug traffickers. Domestic marijuana is generally distributed in small quantities though informal meetings; buyers and distributors are often acquaintances.²³

- There were a total of 405,440 marijuana plants eradicated during in California during 1998.

Marijuana Eradication, California 1996-1998²⁴

	1996	1997	1998
Outdoor Operations			
Plots Eradicated	2,103	1,979	1,641
Cultivated Plants Eradicated	337,927	622,583	313,197
Ditchweed Eradicated	944	0	--
Indoor Operations			
Grows Seized	653	457	543
Plants Eradicated	48,335	71,020	92,243
Total Indoor and Outdoor			
Total Plants Eradicated	387,206	693,603	405,440
Number of Arrests	2,186	2,227	1,746
Number of Weapons Seized	1,023	1,092	1,564
Value of Assets Seized	\$4,081,246	\$4,186,271	\$5,566,717

- Clandestine laboratories are a large problem in California. DEA considers California to be the major State for domestic methamphetamine production. Portable methamphetamine laboratories are being used in suburban and metropolitan communities. The California Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement (BNE) reports that over 940 methamphetamine laboratories were seized and dismantled in 1997. Mexican organizations are increasingly establishing "business" relationships with Hispanic youth gangs in Los Angeles and other areas. These relationships are partly responsible for the increase in the importation and distribution of methamphetamine and its precursor chemicals. Similar to the cocaine distribution networks, operations are usually conducted by either naturalized or illegal aliens. But unlike cocaine distribution, the same parties involved in the distribution are certain to be involved in the manufacture and importation of precursor chemicals and glassware. The major organizations that import methamphetamine use San Ysidro and San Diego as distribution points. Violence has been strongly associated with methamphetamine trade in California. A San Diego distribution organization was implicated in at least 26 murders in a 6-month period in 1993.²⁵

- Drug Trends by Region²⁶

REGION 1

Region 1 consists of the northern rural counties of Siskiyou, Modoc, Trinity Shasta, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Glenn, Butte, Sierra, Nevada, Yuba, Placer, Colusa, Sutter, Yolo, and the central counties of Sacramento, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Alpine, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Mono. These counties, with the exception of Sacramento, are rural with moderate to small population centers.

The climate and the large areas of timberland in the northern counties of this region are prime locations for marijuana cultivation. This region contains the "Emerald Triangle" which is well known for its high potency "home grown" marijuana.

The central counties of this region have experienced an increase of methamphetamine use and production. A majority of large seizures of methamphetamine have involved Mexican nationals in the country illegally.

This region has many counties along the Nevada border and is experiencing an increase of trafficking along Highway 395 that connects Southern California with Reno/Lake Tahoe and continues to Northern California.

Sacramento County has had an increasing problem with street gangs and drug distribution. Elements of Los Angeles gangs have taken root in Sacramento to maintain control of their drug manufacturing and distribution operations. In the past the gangs had only dealt in crack but have recently expanded to methamphetamine.

REGION 2

This region includes the counties of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Sonoma, Marin, Lake, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda counties. These counties are considered rural due to population and size. This region has a high rate of drug trafficking through it due to Highway 101 that connects the southern and northern portions of the state and continues to Oregon and Washington. Indoor and outdoor marijuana cultivation operations permeate the northern portion of this region and are difficult to detect due to the remoteness of the areas. Methamphetamine manufacturing continues on a limited basis in each county.

REGION 3

This region includes the southern central coast counties of San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, and the inland counties of Santa Clara and San Benito. The region is mostly coastal and somewhat mountainous. The counties are moderate to high in population density. Santa Cruz is a coastal and mountainous county with a central location in California that makes it a prime area for drug importation, distribution and manufacturing of marijuana. This region is vulnerable to sea, marine, and ground trafficking of narcotics. There are major highways up and down the coast of this region as well as many ports and unguarded and remote coastal areas. The prevalent drugs in this area are marijuana, methamphetamine, and cocaine.

REGION 4

This region consists of Fresno, Inyo, Kern, King, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, and Tulare Counties. The population of these counties, except Fresno, is low. These counties are rural and located in foothills and mountain terrain. This area has a low cost of living, and with mostly seasonal agricultural employment it also has a low income and high unemployment. These factors along with the sparse areas of the region make it a prime area for the cultivation of marijuana crops and the production of methamphetamine. This region has also seen an increase in gang activity, and their involvement in drug distribution.

REGION 5

This region is comprised of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties. These counties range from low populations in San Luis Obispo to high populations of Los Angeles. This region is vulnerable to marine and ground drug

trafficking. In addition portions of the region, especially Los Angeles County, experience a high volume of tourist and business travel which makes it difficult for law enforcement officers to detect drugs being smuggled in through the International and regional airports.

There are major gangs in operation within Los Angeles and San Luis Obispo counties that are linked to narcotics trade. The Hispanic gangs in the area mainly involved in the trafficking of methamphetamine and marijuana, and the black gangs are involved with crack. Methamphetamine is abundant in this region because it is locally manufactured and the price is relatively cheaper than cocaine.

REGION 6

This region includes San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange Counties. All of these counties are large and densely populated. San Bernardino County is geographically diverse with national forests, and water resources as well as interstate highways make this a prime area for marijuana cultivation and trafficking. Many of the operations in this area employ illegal Mexican Nationals to protect their marijuana crops.

All three of the counties in this region have experienced a dramatic growth in methamphetamine production, trafficking, and use. Riverside County is one of the major methamphetamine production areas of this region. Law enforcement officials dismantled 201 methamphetamine labs from January through August 1996 in western portion of the county alone.

REGION 7

This region is comprised of San Diego and Imperial Counties, which are on the Mexican border. While San Diego County contains one of the largest cities in the U.S. it also contains vast rural areas. Both counties are inundated with drug trafficking, production and use due to their close proximity to the Mexican border. Cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and the precursor chemicals to make methamphetamine are all smuggled through this region. Both counties also have large gang problems that have been on the rise since the 70's. Estimated gang membership has gone from 300 in 1975 to 11,500 in 1996. These gangs are heavily involved in narcotic trafficking which causes turf wars.

Consequences of Use

- There was a total of 1,136 drug abuse deaths in Los Angeles during 1998, for the same year there were 338 deaths in San Diego and 322 in San Francisco.²⁷

Drug Abuse Deaths and Selected Characteristics, California 1998

Characteristics	Los Angeles	San Diego	San Francisco
Deaths	1,136	338	322
GENDER			
Male	822	242	262
Female	314	96	59
RACE/ETHNICITY			
White	576	240	229
Black	230	27	60
Hispanic	296	62	18
Other	32	7	15
AGE			
6 to 17	9	1	1
18 to 25	62	24	24
26 to 34	186	66	52
35 and up	879	245	245
SELECTED DRUGS			
Alcohol in Combo	404	103	108
Cocaine	425	83	158
Heroin/Morphine	444	165	167
Marijuana/Hashish	17	---	5
Methadone	51	8	32
Methamphetamine	111	84	45
PCP	12	1	1
Total Drug Mentions	2,856	878	950

- In Los Angeles during 1998 there were a total of 17,103 drug related emergency department episodes. The most common illicit drugs were cocaine (5,783 mentions), marijuana (3,423), heroin (2,631 mentions), and methamphetamine (786). There were a total of 29,820 drug mentions. Preliminary data for January through June of 1999 shows 8,179 emergency department episodes in Los Angeles.

In San Diego during 1998 there were a total of 6,982 drug related emergency department episodes. The most common illicit drugs were marijuana (1,127 mentions), heroin (1,011 mentions), cocaine (971 mentions), and methamphetamine (721 mentions). There were a total of 12,190 drug mentions. Preliminary data for January through June of 1999 shows 3,143 emergency department episodes in San Diego.

In San Francisco during 1998 there were a total of 9,070 drug related emergency department episodes. The most common illicit drugs were heroin (2,386 mentions), cocaine (1,843 mentions), methamphetamine (616 mentions), and marijuana (394 mentions). There were a total of 12,530 drug mentions. Preliminary data for January

through June of 1999 shows 3,810 emergency department episodes in San Francisco.²⁸

Courts

- In California during FY 1998 of the 6,249 Federal defendants 32.9% were charged with a drug related offense. The most common drug involved in these offenses was marijuana (63%), followed by methamphetamine (15%), powder cocaine (11.9%), heroin (4.7%), and crack cocaine (3%).²⁹

Corrections

- The prison population in California was 159,563 as of January 1999, of these 27.8% are incarcerated for drug offenses. The parole population of California was 111,875 in January 1999, of these 35.7% were charged with drug offenses.³⁰

Treatment

- During 1997 there were 162,694 drug and alcohol treatment admissions in California. The most prevalent illegal drug was heroin with 59,461 treatment admissions.³¹

Drug/Alcohol Treatment Admissions in California 1997

Drug Type	Number of Admissions
Alcohol only	16,538
Alcohol with secondary drug	24,959
Heroin	59,461
Cocaine (smoked)	14,018
Cocaine (other route)	2,821
Marijuana/hashish	12,228
Methamphetamine	29,065
Hallucinogens	158
PCP	771
Inhalants	52
Total Admissions	162,694

Sources

¹ State of California, Department of Finance, California Demographics Web Site,

<http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/Demograp/druhpar.htm>

² State of California Web Site, <http://www.ca.gov/s/>

³ California Office of Criminal Justice Planning Web site <http://www.ocjp.ca.gov/>

⁴ U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports 1998*, October 1999.

⁵ U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, *ADAM: 1998 Report on Adult and Juvenile Arrests*, April 1999.

⁶ Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check: National Trends in Drug Abuse*, Winter 1998.

⁷ National Institute on Drug Abuse, Community Epidemiology Work Group, *Epidemiological Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, 1999.

⁸ Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check: National Trends in Drug Abuse*, Winter 1998.

⁹ Ibid.

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- ¹⁰ National Institute on Drug Abuse, Community Epidemiology Work Group, *Epidemiological Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, 1999
- ¹¹ Executive Office of the President, Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check: National Trends in Drug Abuse*, Winter 1998.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ National Institute on Drug Abuse, Community Epidemiology Work Group, *Epidemiological Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, 1999.
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